



Arlington Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees

Date: November 10, 2022
Time: 7:00 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.
Location: Conducted via remote participation
Attendees: Beth Elliott, Karen Kelleher, Neal Mongold, Jaclyn Pacejo, Eric Helmuth, Jack Nagle
Absent: Phil Tedesco, Vicmarie Santiago
Guests: Beverly Gallo, Rebecca Gruber

Minutes

The meeting began at 7:05pm via zoom.

1. Action Plan Update

The Trustees briefly discussed the fact that the Select Board approved the Trust's Action Plan on November 7, and expressed gratitude to Mr. Helmuth for his passionate statement of support, and to the other Select Board members for their strong support as well. Ms. Gruber noted that their statements were far stronger than the typical statement in support of a report of this type, and reflected strong political support for affordable housing and the Action Plan. Ms. Kelleher acknowledged Mr. Helmuth's helpful guidance developing a plan and a process that gradually built support, and all of the Trustees, and Ms. Gallo and Ms. Gruber, for their work leading to this point. Ms. Kelleher proposed to discuss Implementation and Next Steps at the end of the agenda.

2. Review and Approve Minutes of August 11, September 14 and October 20, 2022, Meetings

There were no comments on any of the three draft documents. **The voting Trustees present voted unanimously to approve the minutes for each of the meetings.**

3. CPA Funding

Ms. Kelleher explained that we had yet to finalize the initial grant agreement for CPA funding, and that she had reviewed the grant agreement and proposed only one change – to allow the funds to be used for any "community housing" eligible under the CPA statute, rather than limiting them to use for community housing eligible for listing on the Subsidized Housing Inventory, which effectively reduces maximum income from 100% of AMI to 80% of AMI. She noted that our Action Plan both commits us to aggressive targeting for low and very low income households, it also explains why retaining flexibility at higher income levels leaves open options to use the funds to avoid displacement of higher income residents, to

negotiate for higher affordability with developers unwilling to include more lower income units, and to create units that might be affordable to moderate-income households, or to very low income households with a voucher (since we have learned that voucher holders have difficulty finding eligible units in Arlington).

Mr. Mongold was uncertain he had seen the grant agreement, so Ms. Kelleher screen shared the grant agreement, and the Trustees reviewed the content of the grant agreement together. After some discussion, **the voting Trustees present voted unanimously to authorize the Chair or Treasurer to execute the Grant Agreement in substantially the form proposed by the CPA Committee, either with or without the requested change discussed by the Trustees, and with such other modifications deemed appropriate by them.**

Ms. Kelleher then also noted that DPCD Deputy Director Kelly Lynema had submitted a preliminary application to the CPA Committee on behalf of the Trust for an additional \$250,000 of CPA funding, and that she would be assisting us to submit a full application, which would likely be due prior to the Trust's December meeting. Since the Trustees would not meet to approve specific implementation strategies before that time, the application would likely be written to request funding to implement the Action Plan broadly, with potential programs and investments noted, but would likely not be for specific programs or projects. Ms. Kelleher indicated that she would ensure that the draft application will be shared with Trustees for comment before submission. **The voting Trustees present voted unanimously to authorize any officer of the Trust to submit an application on behalf of the Trust seeking an additional \$250,000 of CPA funding.**

4. 1021-1025 Massachusetts Avenue Comments

Ms. Elliott noted that the ZBA had requested comments from the AHT regarding the comprehensive permit application received for 1021-1025 Massachusetts Avenue, and shared a description of the 50-unit condominium development near the intersection with Brattle Street, which would include 13 condominiums affordable to purchasers with incomes at or below 80% of area median income (AMI). The comment letter had been written by Ms. Elliott, edited by Ms. Kelleher and circulated before the meeting, but was screen shared and Ms. Elliot noted that it generally expressed strong support for the proposed development because of the opportunity to create 13 rare affordable homeownership units, which require substantial subsidy, at no cost to the Town. She also noted that state and federal subsidies for affordable homeownership are almost nonexistent, so this type of project represents the Town's best – perhaps only – opportunity to create affordable homeownership opportunities given the high cost of single family homes and condominiums in our community.

Ms. Kelleher noted that Action Plan Strategy #2, Create Additional Affordable Housing, included the promotion of mixed-income home ownership developments like this one as one of the actions the Trust proposed to take during the term of the Plan, for these reasons. She also noted that the comment letter included (1) encouragement to seek additional affordable, moderate or mixed income units to meet the need for a full range of housing affordability; (2) a recommendation to advance diversity and equity via permit conditions such as prohibiting local preference, proactively marketing the homes to participants of equity-focused homeownership programs like the STASH and MassDreams programs; and (3) a statement of support for incorporating climate resiliency and sustainability into the design of the development.

Ms. Gallo noted the importance of pre- and post-ownership counseling and other supports to ensure affordable purchasers succeed at keeping and maintaining their homes, which was added to the comment letter. After discussion of the draft letter, **the voting Trustees present voted unanimously to authorize Ms. Kelleher to sign and submit the comment letter, substantially in the form reviewed, on behalf of the Trustees.**

5. Implementation and Next Steps

Ms. Kelleher shared link to an online collaboration space that included the Action Plan outline and space where Trustees could work together simultaneously to suggest implementation steps the Trust should consider taking in the remainder of 2022, the first quarter of 2023, and thereafter. The Trustees spent time suggesting implementation steps for each of the actions listed under each of the three strategies, and very briefly discussing them. Mr. Mongold noted a desire to consider supporting upcoming HCA projects and planning (including a new property HCA is acquiring for development as affordable housing) and Mr. Nagle similarly welcomed the opportunity to discuss supporting the AHA in a new special needs home it is considering locating at 54 Medford St. At the end of the meeting, each participant was asked to add their initials to the tasks they would like to work on. The results of this exercise are attached. Ms. Kelleher indicated that she and Ms. Lynema would work with Ms. Gallo and Ms. Pacejo to propose next steps and start to build a more detailed implementation plan and budget.

6. 2023 Meeting Schedule

The Trustees agreed to meet on Thursday evenings from 7-8:30 in 2023, avoiding conflicts with other relevant Town bodies, including the Diversity Task Group chaired by Ms. Gruber, which currently meets on the 2nd Thursday evening of the month. The next meeting will be scheduled for December 15, and a 2023 schedule will be proposed before the December meeting.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:35 p.m.

Upcoming Trust Meeting: December 15, 2022, 7-8:30 p.m.